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To Incorporate or not to Incorporate

- A Study on how Advice is Affected by Power Instability and the Characteristics of Climate

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## **Abstract**

The two first experiments in this study tested the prediction that power instability, as well as climate, affects advice taking. More specific that unstable power holders incorporate advice to a lower degree than stable power holders, and that individuals in a competitive climate incorporate advice to a lower degree than those in a cooperative climate. Further, the proposition that the climate, cooperative and competitive, would moderate the relationship between power instability and advice taking, was examined. The third experiment tested the prediction that unstable power holders seek advice to a lower degree than stable power holders. Experiment 1 confirmed that a competitive climate reduces the degree of advice taking for individuals with stable power. Those with unstable power position was indifferent to the type of climate and discounted the advice to an equal extend, regardless if the advice was given in a cooperative or competitive climate. Experiment 2 show that knowledge of the competent subordinate reduces the feeling of competition. However, advice is still discounted by individuals both in the competitive climate, and with unstable power position. Experiment 3 highlights that both stable and unstable powerholders seek advice from a competent subordinate to a large degree. Theoretical and practical implications are discussed.

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## Introduction

For both theoretical and practical reasons, the conditions under which people are likely to seek and incorporate advice from others into their own decisions has long been a topic of interest in behavioural decision-making research (Bonaccio & Dalal, 2006; See, Morrison, Rothman, & Soll, 2011; Yaniv & Kleinberger, 2000). Requesting advice is one way to gain influence in organisations (Lai, 2005; Yaniv, 2004) and individuals are said to “take advice” when they modify their own initial thought based on a recommendation or judgment from another source (See et al., 2011). Despite the potential benefits of integrating advice to increase the quality of the decision, the tendency is that individuals demonstrate egocentric advice discounting (Bonaccio & Dalal, 2006; Yaniv, 2004; Yaniv & Kleinberger, 2000), where their own initial opinion is over-weighted and external advice under-weighted. The extent to which leader seek and take advice has been of special interest, as their decisions have great impact on individuals, organisations and the society. The leader is dependent on the input and competence of other organisational members in order to achieve salient goals, and may therefore either seek their advice willingly or receive it unsolicited (Goldsmith & Fitch, 1997). In this paper, we focus on how power instability influence leader’s propensity to seek and take advice. Further, we examine how the climate of competition or cooperation influence advice taking, before testing if climate moderate the relationship between power instability and advice taking.

One of the prominent characteristics of leaders is power, which we define as “relative control over another’s valued outcomes” (Fiske & Berdahl, 2007, p. 679). Power is related to reduced threats to core needs and lower dependency of others when it comes to obtaining resources (Keltner, Gruenfeld, & Anderson, 2003). Research by Magee and Galinsky (2008) suggest that power is correlated to stronger job security, enhanced financial rewards, the ability to influence others more easily, and being more effective in performing one’s job. However, power can prevent incorporation of advice, which could ultimately harm the organisation (See et al., 2011). Tost, Gino, and Larrick (2012) found the powerful to take less advice than those in a neutral or low power state, indicating that the powerful experience defensive feelings when receiving advice from competent subordinates. Further, even though leaders hold legitimate power (French & Raven, 1959), their power positions are not always stable (Leheta, Dimotakis, &

Schatten, 2017). The need of high competence together with today's dynamic work environment might make leaders perceive their followers as competitors instead of static subordinates (Leheta et al., 2017). Not all followers identify with the classical perspective of being merely a subordinate to the leader, some followers perceive themselves more as co-leaders or partners (Carsten, Uhl-Bien, West, Patera, & McGregor, 2010). Thus, their actions and attitudes can be interpreted as a threat for the leader and the feeling of envy might arise (Crusius, Lange, & Cologne, 2016; Leheta et al., 2017). Sturm and Antonakis (2015) emphasised the importance of researching unstable and stable power positions because it considers power not to be constant. Based on this, we investigate the extent to which power instability influence leader's degree of advice-taking. More specifically, if leaders with unstable power enhances the egocentric advice discounting, resulting in lower receptiveness to the provided advice from a competent subordinate, compared to leaders with stable power.

Additionally, this paper will investigate whether competitive or cooperative context influence the advice taking. Johns (2006) argue that research in organisational science have overlooked the importance of context. To include context is important because it regulates the goals of the group, and what characteristics that are valued within the group (Li, Chen, & Blader, 2016). Therefore, organisational context can be a part of determining how the leader makes decisions and relate to their colleagues. Cooperative and competitive context have been argued to be related to particular organisational importance (Li et al., 2016). In a cooperative context team members rewards are often correlated, where expertise and contribution of each member are highly valued so that all members can benefit (Li et al., 2016). Thus, leaders may use their power in order to benefit the collective goals to attain high quality decision-making (Li et al., 2016), and therefore potentially be more receptive to advice. On the other hand, the feeling of competition increases decision biases like sense of control and optimism (Malhotra, Ku, & Murnighan, 2008), which is related to increased feelings of confidence (Tost et al., 2012). Correspondingly, the relationship between power and advice discounting was mediated by the feeling of competitiveness in a high-power state in Tost et al. (2012; Experiment 3). Tost et al. (2012, Experiment 4) found that feeling of cooperativeness towards the advice-giver causes more advice taking than when the feeling of competition is evoked.

Thus, different types of climate may alter how leaders relate to advice. We therefore investigate to what extent organisational climate influence leader's degree of advice-taking, and how climate moderate the relationship between power instability and advice-taking.

In this paper, we aim to contribute to the existing literature on power and advice. We build on to the existing advice taking literature by replacing high and low power state with stable and unstable power. Our work complement previous research by Tost et al. (2012) who investigated how power influence unsolicited advice taking, through exploring the effects of power instability on soliciting advice. Our research aims to contribute to the power literature by answering the call of scholars to address how the effect of climate (Li et al., 2016) may influence powerholders. We introduce the moderating variable of cooperative and competitive climate, previously not examined in the advice literature. By examining climate, our research can potentially contribute to the understanding of when power holders act in self-serving manner versus group oriented actions (Anderson & Brion, 2014). By including climate, our research contributes to a more holistic view of the effect of power on leader's degree of advice taking, which is highly relevant for organisations.

## Theoretical Background

### *Advice*

When organisational leaders make decisions, they often receive input from advisors, both within and outside their organisations (Bonaccio & Dalal, 2006; Tost et al., 2012). Advice could offer the decision maker salient information such as a highly competent opinion in order to solve a problem, a different point of view, and assistance to find options (Goldsmith & Fitch, 1997). Nevertheless, even though the advice entails an informational element, information is rarely viewed as just information. One of the dilemmas of receiving advice entails the indication that the advice giver perceive their expertise as greater than the receiver, which can be viewed as a criticism of the level of competence of the receiver (Goldsmith & Fitch, 1997). However, advice can benefit both the recipients of the advice (*the judge*) and the provider of the advice (*the advisor*). Judges that have an open mind to guidance can overcome cognitive biases that leads to self-serving action and create enhanced resolutions to problems than they would have on their own (Garvin & Margolis, 2015). Providers of the advice get to influence important decisions and empower others to act (Garvin & Margolis, 2015).

### *To incorporate or not to incorporate*

Previous research have found that individuals tend to demonstrate egocentric advice discounting (Yaniv, 2004; Yaniv & Kleinberger, 2000) where people tend to favour their own opinions (Bonaccio & Dalal, 2006; Fransen, Smit, & Verlegh, 2015; Tormala & Petty, 2002, 2004), thus not benefiting from incorporating others perspectives (Cialdini, 2005; Soll & Larrick, 2009). Yaniv and Milyavsky (2007) research found that judges who decide to incorporate some of the advisors' opinions tended to egocentrically disregard the opinions furthest from their initial thought, and average the remaining. Offering advice have been suggested as a challenging support due to the multiple goals and outcomes, such as feeling of obligation, perceived appropriateness, and effectiveness that differ on various contextual factors e.g., the source and topic (Goldsmith & Fitch, 1997). Further, the discounting of advice is likely to arise when judges perceive their own estimations to be superior to the estimations and perspectives of others, and thus experience a higher level of confidence in their individual abilities (Bonaccio &



Dalal, 2006; Cialdini, 2005; Krueger, 2003), and when emotions that enhances certainty, such as anger, arises (Gino & Schweitzer, 2008). The discounting of advice could make the receiver seem ungrateful and disrespectful to the advice giver (Goldsmith & Fitch, 1997). On the other hand, the judge ascribe value to the advice when the advice is; costly to acquire (Gino, 2008), if the task is challenging (Gino & Moore, 2007; Gino, Shang, & Croson, 2009; Schrah, Dalal, & Sniezek, 2006), if they are anxious (Gino, Brooks, & Schweitzer, 2012), if the advisor is knowledgeable (Goldsmith & Fitch, 1997; Soll & Larrick, 2009; Yaniv, 2004) if the receiver has relational closeness to the provider (Goldsmith & Fitch, 1997), and if the advisor is confident (Soll & Larrick, 2009; Van Swol & Sniezek, 2005). Moreover, advice could be used as an impression management tool where individuals might solicit advice strategically, in order to improve their impression as competent and warm (Liljenquist, 2010), exclusive of the intention to utilise the advice they obtain (Brooks, Gino, & Schweitzer, 2015). Correspondingly, advice can be viewed as helpful and caring, or as “butting in” (Goldsmith & Fitch, 1997), where the judge reserve the right to evaluate the intention of the advisor (Bonaccio & Dalal, 2006).

#### *Solicited and unsolicited advice*

Subordinates who view their role as proactive have been found to emphasise the importance of contributing with unsolicited feedback or advice (Carsten et al., 2010). The intentions of the judge is not necessarily clear to the advisor and might therefore be perceived the same as when seeking advice with the intention to benefit from them (Brooks et al., 2015). Proactive subordinates might become discouraged with organisations that value status hierarchies, and leaders who offer few prospects for contribution to the leadership process (Berger, Ridgeway, & Zelditch, 2002), providing the leaders with the dilemma of how to remain leaders while including the subordinates. However, individuals respond more negatively to unsolicited support than to obtaining no support at all, moderated by the felt need of support (Deelstra et al., 2003), and unsolicited advice is especially at risk of being deduced as butting in (Goldsmith & Fitch, 1997). A potential mechanism for reduced advice taking, proposed by Tost et al. (2012), is that unsolicited advice is seen as a challenge to power. When unsolicited advice is offered by an expert, feelings of competition is evoked and the advice will be discarded due to the defensiveness with regards to the status of the expert that could be a challenge

to their own standings (Tost et al., 2012). Moreover, individuals tend to not seek help, even if they need it (Ackerman & Kenrick, 2008), due to fear of reduced status by appearing incompetent (F. Lee, 1997). However, the concerns about seeming incompetent is argued by Brooks et al. (2015) to be faulty; seeking advice could benefit impression management by increasing perceptions of competence from the advisors perspective, especially if the task is difficult. Being elected to give advice to a leader might arouse an advisor's ego (Brooks et al., 2015). It is argued that by soliciting advice, leaders could compliment the advisor and improve the advisor's perceptions of the judge (Cialdini, 2001), and imply a congruence between the advice seeker's values and those of the adviser (Brooks et al., 2015). Further, Yaniv and Kleinberger (2000) found that judges tend to solicit more advice from precise advisors, and judges insecurity of their initial verdict predicts advice seeking (Gibbons, 2003 cited in Bonaccio & Dalal, 2006). Moreover, judges who seek advice have been found more likely to incorporate the recommendation than judges who receive unsolicited advice (Gibbons, 2003 cited in Bonaccio & Dalal, 2006).

#### *Social comparison*

Social comparison theory posits that individuals evaluate their own abilities and opinions in comparisons with others, which contribute to individuals understanding about themselves, their capabilities and possessions (Festinger, 1954). Moreover, when individuals compare themselves with others they strive to be better than their existing level of performance and more capable than the individuals with whom they compare themselves (Festinger, 1954). Social comparison is not necessarily made intentionally, but may occur when individuals come across unique information about themselves (Greenberg, Ashton-James, & Ashkanasy, 2007) resulting in negative reactions (Smith & Kim, 2007), such as envy (Crusius et al., 2016). Envy is the agony that appears when desired qualities are absent in comparison to others (Smith & Kim, 2007) and is often associated with negativity and hostility towards the one that causes the envy (Cohen-Charash, 2009; Tai, Narayanan, & McAllister, 2012), which can result in social undermining (Tai et al., 2012). Social undermining regards "intentional actions that diminish a target's ability to establish and maintain positive relationships, work-related success, and favourable reputation in the workplace" (Duffy, Ganster, & Pagon, 2002, p. 333). Further, in order to protect the self-esteem, one

might attempt to “get back” at the envied individual (Cohen-Charash & Mueller, 2007), or avoid them all together (Leheta et al., 2017). Envy could therefore be a part of why leaders goes against the benefit of the organisation and decides not to follow salient advice. Further, Leheta et al. (2017) argue that envy can be triggered by capabilities of the subordinate that organisations commonly deem positive and significant, such as expertise.

In relation to this, advice can be interoperated as threat to the knowledge and capabilities of the judge (Goldsmith & Fitch, 1997), and individuals pursuing to preserve independence and power resist others proposals (Koestner et al., 1999). Advice could threaten the receiver’s view of self-worth together with lowered sense of autonomy (Bonaccio & Dalal, 2006; Deelstra et al., 2003; Goldsmith & Fitch, 1997), which could harm their self-esteem (Harber, Schneider, Everard, & Fisher, 2005; Reinhardt, Boerner, & Horowitz, 2006). Additionally, internal rivals have been found to provoke more threat and were less attractive in terms of gaining their knowledge (Menon, Thompson, & Choi, 2006). On the other hand, threatening external rivals was more attractive to capture knowledge from (Menon et al., 2006), indicating that advice is more interesting if the provider do not have the possibility to harm the social standing of the receiver. Social comparison can therefore be a salient part of the reasons behind dark leadership (Schyns & Schilling, 2013), like abusive supervision (Tepper, 2000).

### ***Power***

Power is stated to be a basic law of nature that is fundamental to human interaction (Russell, 1939) and have been studied in various disciplines such as social science, philosophy, economics and history (Fiske & Berdahl, 2007). Power is a salient part of organisational life and can be expressed in numerous ways; the action individual takes (Anderson & Galinsky, 2006; Galinsky, Gruenfeld, & Magee, 2003), physical appearance (Anderson, John, Keltner, & Kring, 2001), postures (Carney, Cuddy, & Yap, 2010, 2015; Cuddy, Wilmuth, Yap, & Carney, 2015; Yap, Wazlawek, Lucas, Cuddy, & Carney, 2013), personality (Anderson & Kilduff, 2009; Anderson, Spataro, & Flynn, 2008; Grant, Gino, & Hofmann, 2011), clothing (Bellezza, Gino, & Keinan, 2013), and the language they use (Magee, Milliken, & Lurie, 2010; Wakslak, Smith, & Han, 2014). These are all part of describing the amount of power one hold in a group. Previous definitions

of power can generally be separated into three categories; (1) Power as influence, (2) Power as potential influence, and (3) Power as outcome control (Fiske & Berdahl, 2007). However, including power as either the potential to influence, or actual influence is argued to be problematic because influence is thought to be what power does, and not what it is (Fiske & Berdahl, 2007). Therefore, Fiske and Berdahl (2007, p. 679) defined power as “relative control over another’s valued outcomes”.

The understanding of social hierarchies are important to understand power (Magee & Galinsky, 2008). Throughout evolutionary history, there have been excessive benefits of being high in social rank such as greater respect, greater access to resources, and a greater ability to control one’s own outcomes and goals (Magee & Galinsky, 2008; Maner & Case, 2016). Moreover, powerful people experience fewer threats to their core needs and lower dependence on others when it comes to obtaining resources (Keltner et al., 2003). As such, power holders enjoy stronger job security, enhanced financial rewards, the ability to influence others more easily and being more effective in performing one’s job (Magee & Galinsky, 2008). By contrast, absence of power is related to lack of independence and control in one’s job, vulnerability to unfair treatment, experiencing reduced job satisfaction, and morale (Keltner et al., 2003). Thus, maintaining high position in a hierarchy becomes important as well as seizing opportunities to increase power and status (Garbinsky, Klesse, & Aaker, 2014; Kim, Pettit, & Reitman, 2017; Leheta et al., 2017).

In the traditional view, leaders are supposed to mentor, support, and develop their subordinates (Vroom & Jago, 2007). Regardless, leaders may not always use their power to act in the best interest of the subordinate and organisation (Einarsen, Aasland, & Skogstad, 2007). For example, leaders have been found to use their power for self-interest over group goals (Maner & Mead, 2010; Williams, 2014) and to gain competence (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Scandura (1998) found that some mentors deliberately hinder the progress and career advancement of subordinates that are perceived as threats to self-interest. Subordinates can be a positive resource to the leader where leaders seek to advance their own social standing, status and self-esteem (Wilson, Sin, & Conlon, 2010). Leheta et al. (2017) and Williams (2014) argue that the desire to remain in power increase the self-serving

behaviour. Unfavourable social comparisons can therefore result in negative reactions (Leheta et al., 2017; Smith & Kim, 2007) such as maintain their position because it addresses the alleged differences in social status (Crusius et al., 2016; Leheta et al., 2017). Further, power has been found to increase level of competitiveness (Magee, Galinsky, & Gruenfeld, 2007), illusionary control (Fast, Gruenfeld, Sivanathan, & Galinsky, 2009) and expression of aggression towards the threat due to feelings of incompetence (Fast & Chen, 2009). Additionally, power create scepticism on the virtue of others' favours, constructing a cynical perception on others' generosity (Inesi, Gruenfeld, & Galinsky, 2012). Continuing separation of the perceived difference in power between leaders and their subordinates is argued to be significant for leaders who desire their power to accurately portray their superior rank in the hierarchy (Leheta et al., 2017).

#### *Power and advice*

Previous research have found that power may have an impact on basic decision making processes, particularly those that concern decisions taken under risky conditions (Anderson & Galinsky, 2006; Galinsky et al., 2003). The situated focus theory of power (Guinote, 2007) argues that since the powerful are less dependent on others for their outcomes, they focus more on themselves (Fiske & Dépret, 1996). Similarly, Weick and Guinote (2008) found power to make individuals more perceptive to their own subjective experiences when forming attitudes and judgments. Tost et al. (2012) suggested that advice discounting is more likely to occur when the judge feels optimistic about making a good decision, feels that the decision is under control, and when the judge have confidence about own ability in the decision. Since these elements often are associated with power; power leads individuals to be optimistic about the results they can produce (Tost et al., 2012). Consequently, the perceived high level of power corresponds to discounting advice (Tost et al., 2012). On the other hand, perceived low level of power is related to lower optimism, control, and confidence which could result in greater need for participation from others and therefore lower reluctance to take advice (Tost et al., 2012). In relation to this, power can decrease sensitivity to external information (Galinsky, Magee, Gruenfeld, Whitson, & Liljenquist, 2008), which might include advice from others (See et al., 2011). Thus, power can prime individuals to be less open to genuine advice, even when the advice can help attain accuracy and enhance performance (See et al., 2011).

Moreover, power have been found to increase the confidence in decision makers initial assessments and confidence in judgments and general knowledge (Fast, Sivanathan, Mayer, & Galinsky, 2012; See et al., 2011; Tormala & Petty, 2002; Tost et al., 2012), and thus high-power creates decreased predisposition to persuasive messages (Brinol, Petty, Valle, Rucker, & Becerra, 2007). Moreover, a proposed mechanism for reduced advice taking by Tost et al. (2012) regards unsolicited advice being seen as a challenge to power. Unsolicited advice offered by an expert evoke competitive feeling and defensiveness with regards to the status of the expert that could be a challenge to their own standings (Tost et al., 2012). Additionally, when the advisor is an expert, the information provided is most likely valuable for the judge and therefore the dependence on the advisor increases and the balance of power shifts (Tost et al., 2012). See et al. (2011) notes that this relationship might arise from internalised role expectations, where powerful individuals are expected to be confident and the belief that advice taking is an indication of limitations.

#### *Threat to power*

Based on social comparison theory leaders would react positively to their subordinates if there is no threat to the leader's self-perception as a leader (Leheta et al., 2017). However, if a leader recognise that a subordinate is superior in some aspects, they can react negatively and therefore, in a hierarchical structure, a leader might perceive their subordinate as a challenger to their position, thus experience them as a threat (Leheta et al., 2017). A threat response has been found when individuals assess the possibility of change in their superior position (Scheepers & Ellemers, 2005). Correspondingly, status movers have been defined by Kim et al. (2017, p. 3) as “behaviour(s) performed with the intent of changing or solidifying a target’s current status ranking in the group”. Subordinates may seek to decrease the power gap between themselves and the leader (Keltner et al., 2003), whereas leaders might be motivated to preserve the gap to protect their advantaged position (Van Vugt, 2006). Advice might be used as a tool for the status movers to close the gap between the leader and themselves. Further, power increases the degree of felt need to be competent (Fast & Chen, 2009) in order to maintain their position (Georgesesen & Harris, 2006). Thus, the feeling of incompetence creates a threatened situation and the powerful reacts in a defensive manner (Fast & Chen, 2009).

Handgraaf, Van Dijk, Vermunt, Wilke, and De Dreu (2008) found that there is a significant difference in the treatment of no-power holders and those that hold some retaliatory power, where having some power is evaluated negatively by the powerholders. Thus, when power holders relate to weaker associates who still have some power to retaliate the associate represents a potential threat, which calls for strategic or competitive behaviour (Handgraaf et al., 2008). Power holders have been found to respond to threat by increasing self-serving behaviour at the cost of the goals of the group (Anderson & Brion, 2014). The maintenance of power is, amongst others, influenced by self-enhancement (Pfeffer & Fong, 2005), by for instance viewing them self as better than others and avoiding situations that undermine their opinions. A threatened power position has been found to increase the likelihood that the leader will have negative attitudes towards the subordinate in a problem solving interaction (Georgesens & Harris, 2006). Perceived threat by a competent follower might lead the powerful to harm others in the form of defensive denigration (Cho & Fast, 2012) and protection of their position in the organisation, rather than supporting and developing the skills of the follower (Georgesens & Harris, 2006; Maner & Case, 2016). Hence, a disconnection between the personal goals of the leader and the goal of the company (Leheta et al., 2017).

### *The stability of power*

Creating stable hierarchies are part of determining whether power is kept or lost (Anderson & Brion, 2014). Power is a social and relational concept that entails an assessment between the leader's awareness of how others view their power comparative to how others judge their subordinates power (Carlson, Vazire, & Furr, 2011; Elfenbein, Eisenkraft, & Ding, 2009). Changes in power affect the purpose of any social construction, specifically those with hierarchical distinctions (Flynn, Gruenfeld, Molm, & Polzer, 2011). Power holders constantly encounter rivals who compete for their position and must find ways to remain in their position (Anderson & Brion, 2014). Modifying the stability of one's power may consequently alter the perceptions of one's overall level of power (Jordan, Sivanathan, & Galinsky, 2011). Power struggles arises within teams when members are consciously competing over power (Greer, Van Bunderen, & Yu, 2017). The stability of power, where the roles could or could not change, influence how high power individuals respond to threat. Scheepers, Röell, and

Ellemers (2015) found that when power is unstable, high-power individuals feel threatened, whereas low-power participants feel positively challenged. Power-dependence theory (Emerson, 1962) entails the volatility of power where social dynamics, such as advice, can be the reason for power loss because expertise is a source of power (French & Raven, 1959) for advisors due to the informational element that could be valued by the judge. As such, the advisor's expertise increases the dependence of the judge on the advisor and expertise shifts the balance of power in the advisor's favour (Tost et al., 2012).

Further, leaders that experience their positions as insecure are more likely to encounter feelings such as stress, anxiety, and uncertainty about keeping their jobs (Ashford, Lee, & Bobko, 1989; Greenhalgh & Rosenblatt, 1984). Thus, creating interest in knowing how they compare with anyone in the organisation who might substitute them (Dijkstra, Gibbons, & Buunk, 2011). Therefore, in relation to power, the leader's social comparisons with subordinates are more likely to result in envy when the insecurity is high (Leheta et al., 2017). When power relations are unstable, the powerful might be more sensitive to threats because they have more to lose (Anderson & Berdahl, 2002). Conservative decision making among power-motivated individuals have been found when there was potential for power loss and not when power was described as stable (Maner, Gailliot, Butz, & Peruche, 2007). Hence, suggesting a tendency to make conservative choices driven by a desire to hold onto their power (Maner et al., 2007). Consequently, leaders who perceive threats and instability to their position will strive to protect the power, even at the cost of others (Williams, 2014).

Based on the reasoning above we propose that individuals who perceive their power position to be unstable will respond in a defensive manner by over-weighting their own opinion and not taking the advice provided by a competent subordinate. Thus, the defensiveness signifies an urge to determine supremacy over the advisor and confirming their own entitlement to power. This leads to our first hypotheses:

***Hypothesis 1:*** *Power instability reduces weight of advice (advice taking); such that advice is weighted less heavily by individuals with unstable power than by individuals with stable power.*



Moreover, we propose a connection between power instability and the willingness to solicit advice from a competent subordinate. Solicited advice is often perceived as more cooperative and helpful, compared to unsolicited advice. Nevertheless, in an unstable power position, leaders may be less prone to ask for help (Ackerman & Kenrick, 2008). We suggest that soliciting advice differs from receiving unsolicited advice, but that power instability will affect the same way; leaders with unstable power will solicit advice to a lower degree compared to leaders with stable power.

***Hypothesis 2:** Power instability reduces willingness to solicit advice, such that individuals with unstable power solicit advice less than individuals with stable power.*

### **Context**

There are several variables that coincide to create an organisational context (Porter & McLaughlin, 2006) where the organisational climate may have particular importance in determining the relationship with the subordinates (Carsten et al., 2010). Context is thought to be an important, but largely overlooked, moderator of hierarchical dynamics (Johns, 2006; Leheta et al., 2017; Li et al., 2016; Schaerer, Lee, Galinsky, & Thau, 2018). Liden and Antonakis (2009) states that context should be included in research as it influences the variability that may emerge in the constructs that are studied and the potential of moderate relations between variables. Context has been defined by Johns (2006, p. 386) as “situational opportunities and constraints that affect the occurrence and meaning of organizational behaviour as well as functional relationships between variables”. The context entails the organisations beliefs and norms about what is suitable, preferred, or valued in a certain situation (Li et al., 2016), and have an explanatory role in psychology (Bazire & Brézillon, 2005). Taking into account how climate affect behaviour is important because individuals generally have higher intentions to act in certain ways when the behaviour is in accordance with norms in the social context (Ajzen, 1991). Negative feelings are less likely to result in harming actions when the organisational context is against such behaviour (Leheta et al., 2017).

Competitive and cooperative interactions is of particular interest because many organisations are becoming more team-based over individual based (Allred, Snow, & Miles, 1996), which allows more room for social comparison (Buunk, Zurriaga, Peiró, Nauta, & Gosalvez, 2005). The cooperative and competitive context influence both how leaders and subordinates interact, as well as the outcome of the interaction (Tjosvold, Andrews, & Jones, 1983). In a cooperative context team members rewards are often correlated where expertise and contribution of each member are highly valued so that all members can benefit (Li et al., 2016). A competitive context usually entails a negative relationship of team members rewards where members may neglect or even harm others advancement in order to accelerate their own position (Li et al., 2016). As such, in a cooperative context, individuals recognise that they can reach their goal only if the other group members also do so, whereas in a competitive context, goals can be reached when other participants cannot and the gains of one actor is at the cost of another (Deutsch, 1962). In a cooperative context, employees have been found to exchange resources and work effectively to complete their task. Whereas a competitive climate has been linked to withholding resources and less progress in task completion (Tjosvold, 1990). Further, cooperative context in relation to decision making can stimulate security, openness, positive expectations, interest, and knowledge of the other's position, which increase taking others opinion into account (Tjosvold & Deemer, 1980). Thus, different views and arguments within a cooperative context facilitates participatory decision making (Tjosvold & Deemer, 1980). Additionally, cooperativeness have been found to enhance the accuracy in task performance (Beersma et al., 2003), and a cooperative context in problem solving has been found to outperform the competitive context (Qin, Johnson, & Johnson, 1995).

Competitive context can lead to insecurity, closed mind-set, knowledge but little curiosity or acknowledgement of the other's view, and failure to come to an agreement (Tjosvold & Deemer, 1980). Individuals that seek status in a competitive climate might emphasise their own opinions over others, dominate and challenge others inputs (Li et al., 2016). Intergroup status contests may arise in cooperative climates, but they are more dominant or detrimental in a competitive climate, or when the idea of competition is generated (Li et al., 2016). Proactive behaviour, such as unsolicited advice, can be viewed by others as a sign

of power (Magee, 2009). A high sense of rivalry increases the sense of competition and therefore interfere with rational decision making, especially if the competition is between few actors (Malhotra et al., 2008).

Tost et al. (2012 Experiment 3) found that powerful individuals that received advice from experts had higher sense of competitiveness towards the advice giver, and reduced advice taking. Additionally, Tost et al. (2012, Experiment 4) found that feeling of cooperativeness towards the advice-giver causes high power individuals to incorporate advice to a higher degree than when the feeling of competition is evoked. As such, giving high power individuals a cooperative mind-set leads them to behave more like the low power holders, accepting advice more readily from experts (Tost et al., 2012). Moreover, perception of threat to the current position an individual holds is thought to be influenced by the context of cooperativeness or competitiveness (Li et al., 2016). Correspondingly, a cooperative context has been found to reduce the negative effects of social comparison (Buunk et al., 2005). Since a cooperative context entails correspondence in outcomes, this will also induce similar responses in social comparison, resulting in that individuals will be pleased to observe competent performances of their colleagues, and displeased to observe incompetent performances (Smith, 2000). In a competitive setting the maintenance of the status is of high concern and the powerful might feel threatened by the more competent subordinate, resulting in dominating and self-centred behaviour which hinders others from contributing and excelling their status (Li et al., 2016). Following the research by Tost et al. (2012), we propose that individuals in a competitive climate will incorporate advice to a lower degree than those in a cooperative climate when receiving advice from a competent subordinate. This leads to our third hypotheses:

***Hypothesis 3: Competitive climate reduces weight of advice (advice taking); such that advice is weighted less heavily by individuals in a competitive climate than by individuals in a cooperative climate.***

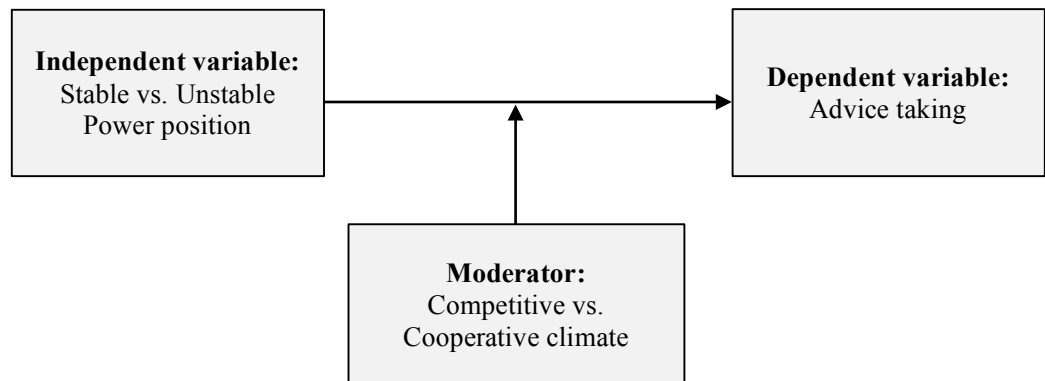
Unstable power is a fundamental threat to leaders (Maner & Mead, 2010). In their recent review Anderson and Brion (2014) found that less is known about the psychological effects of having a threatened power position. Unstable power

creates uncertainty about keeping their position (Maner & Mead, 2010). Uncertainty is a motivator for social comparison (Festinger, 1954) and therefore, holding an unstable power position, rather than stable, individuals are more likely to compare them self with the competent subordinate. Pitesa and Thau (2013) argue that powerful decision makers act consistently with their preferences, even at the cost of their social context. Additionally, unstable powerholders have been found to exclude a highly skilled team member, and to prevent a talented team member from having any influence over a group task (Maner & Mead, 2010). Hence, the unstable position leads leaders to act in a self-serving manner in order to protect their position (Maner & Mead, 2010), and to not seek help in fear of appearing incompetent (F. Lee, 1997). Therefore, we propose that power instability trump climate, where individuals with unstable power positions avoid taking advice, even in a cooperative climate, to not appear incompetent and make them more exposed to the threat. Hence, individuals who receive advice from a competent subordinate will incorporate less advice if the position is unstable, regardless of the climate being cooperative or competitive due to the felt need of protecting their position. If the position is stable, we propose that individuals will be more sensitive to climate and incorporate advice accordingly. More specifically, that individuals with stable power will take advice to a higher degree in a cooperative climate than in a competitive climate.

***Hypothesis 4:** There is an interaction effect of power instability and characteristics of the climate. More specifically, individuals with unstable power decrease weighting of advice such that the advice originating in a competitive and cooperative climate will receive equal weight, while individuals with stable power differentiate by increasing the weight of advice when the advice originates in a cooperative climate, while decreasing the weight of advice originating in a competitive climate.*

## Research Model

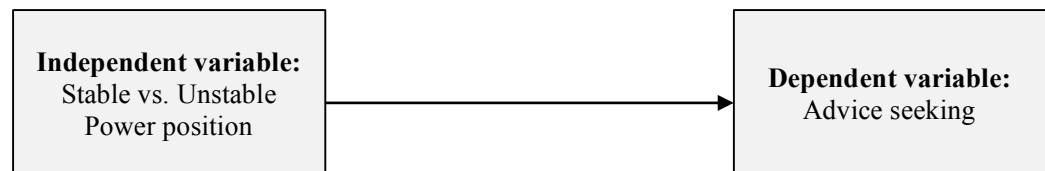
Based on the existing literature discussed above, our experiments build on Tost et al. (2012) research model. Our two first experiments are examining (1) To what extent do power instability decrease advice taking, and (2) To what extent climate (competitive vs. cooperative) moderate the relationship between power instability and advice taking (Figure 1).



**Figure 1.**

Research Model 1 – tested in Experiment 1 and 2.

Further, our final experiment examines; To what extent do power instability decrease advice seeking (Figure 2).



**Figure 2.**

Research Model 2 – tested in Experiment 3.

## **Overview of our research**

We tested our hypotheses in three experimental studies. Following the approach of other scholars in the advice taking literature (e.g., Tost et al. (2012); Harvey and Fischer (1997); Menon et al. (2006)), the studies employed different estimation tasks over multiple (Experiment 1 and 2) and single (Experiment 3) rounds. In the first experiment, we examined the negative effect of power instability on the degree of advice taking (Hypothesis 1). Further, we examined our prediction that a competitive climate has a negative effect on the degree of advice taking (Hypothesis 3), before we examined how climate moderate the relationship between power instability and advice taking (Hypothesis 4). Our second experiment is identical to Experiment 1, except that instead of receiving advice from an unknown subordinate, participants had knowledge of the subordinate as they initially were asked to write the initials of a very talented, competent and ambitious person they know. Hence, Experiment 2 examine the same as Experiment 1 (Hypothesis 1, 3 and 4), and function as a comparison. Lastly, our third experiment investigate our prediction that power instability has a negative effect on soliciting advice (Hypothesis 2).

### **Experiment 1: Power, climate and advice taking**

In Experiment 1, we asked people to participate in our survey, estimated to last approximately 15 minutes. First, people were asked to engage in repeated estimation tasks. We then manipulated whether participants experienced power instability versus power stability, as well as a competitive versus cooperative organisational climate. After these manipulations, participants engaged in the same estimation task, but the second time they additionally received advice. We expected to find a negative relationship between power instability and advice taking, such that advice was weighted less heavily by individuals with unstable power than by individuals with stable power (Hypothesis 1). Similarly, we expected advice to be weighted less heavily by individuals in a competitive climate than by individuals in a cooperative climate (Hypothesis 3), and that there would be an interaction effect of power instability and characteristics of climate (Hypothesis 4).

## *Method*

### *Participants*

The experiment was distributed as a link through Facebook, LinkedIn and email, with identical introductory text to make sure the participants had the same information. Additionally, we held a competition where we entered three classrooms and approached tables with students at BI Norwegian Business School, informing the students that they could win a gift voucher on 200NOK at a coffee bar if they participated in the study. 214 people participated in the study. 52,3% of the participants were male, 61,2% under the age of 29 year, 43,5% students and 50% with less than one year of leadership experience. They were randomly assigned to one of the four experimental groups (see Appendix 1). Participation was unpaid (with the expectance of the winner of the voucher) and voluntary. Confidentiality was assured and participation was anonymous, as no traceable or identifying data was stored.

### *Experimental Design*

All the material presented to the participants was in English, including the introductory text in the distribution channels. Initially the participants were presented with a vignette where they were given information about their leadership position in a financial trading company, together with their tasks and responsibilities. Thereafter, the repeated estimation task was presented. Participants was provided with figures depicting stock price trends of four different companies, and then asked to estimate the stock price of the next week as accurately as they could.

After the first round of estimation, the participants were randomly assigned to one of four experimental conditions following a 2x2 between-subjects design, with the first factor being power instability (stable vs. unstable) and the second factor being the characteristics of climate (competitive vs. cooperative). The material for the experimental conditions are provided (see Appendix 1). The second estimation task was presented immediately after the vignette was provided. In this final estimation round, the participants were provided with information about a very ambitious and competent subordinate, with an expressed goal of becoming a manager in the company, that clearly had a talent for stock predictions. The participants were provided with their initial estimates, as well as the estimate of

the subordinate. After viewing their previous estimate as well as those of the advisor's, the participant could revise the estimate and make a new assessment, which then registered as the final estimate.

### *Measure*

There are several methods to calculate advice taking (Bonaccio & Dalal, 2006), and we follow Tost et al. (2012) and use "Weight of Advice" (WOA). This measure to what extent the participant revises their estimate in the direction of the advisors estimate (Harvey & Fischer, 1997).

$$\text{WOA} = \frac{\text{finalestimate} - \text{initialestimate}}{\text{advice} - \text{initialestimate}}$$

The WOA = 0 when the advice has no influence, WOA = 0,5 when equally weighting their own and the advisor's estimate, and WOA = 1 when the final estimate is exactly the same as the advice.

Prior research often considered absolute values when computing the WOA measure, however there are some concerns about absolute values for interpreting WOA (Bonaccio & Dalal, 2006). If participants move away from the advice; where the participant's initial estimate is 40, advice is 50, and the participant's final estimate is 30, by using absolute values the participant is then considered to follow the advice by equally weighting their own and the advisor's estimate (WOA = 0.5). Hence, absolute values are misleading in situations where the participant final estimate moves away from the advice. One could argue this to provide misleading interpretations as negative values (where the respondent fully move away from the advice, WOA = -1) is changed into positive values (the respondent fully follow the advice, WOA = 1).

We therefore decided to use the formula without absolute values, which is equivalent to Harvey and Fischer (1997) measure (Bonaccio & Dalal, 2006). In comparison to the formula with absolute values (Yaniv, 2004), Harvey and Fischer (1997) formula is unbounded on either side, meaning that it takes on negative and positive values exceeding -1 and 1. Nevertheless, Harvey and Fischer (1997) noted that the vast majority did fall between 0.00 and 1.00, as it did in our case as well. However, following (Bonaccio & Dalal, 2006), values that



fall outside the range of -1 to 1 are in our case adjusted<sup>1</sup>. To investigate the extent to which the different ways of calculating WOA in the literature affected the nature and significance of the results, and conclusions, we conducted the analyses using the absolute value approach as well across all studies. In the first experiment the nature and significance of the results did change when using absolute values<sup>2</sup>. These differences are further discussed in the general discussion.

## **Results**

### *Manipulation checks: Power instability*

To test for the effect of the power manipulation, we assessed power instability on a 7-point scale (1 = Not true, 7 = True) with the following three items: (1) My boss is currently considering if I should be replaced as Manager and (2) My boss has expressed mistrust in me as a Manager. The estimated reliability was  $\alpha = .89$ . A 2 (Power: unstable vs. stable) x 2 (Climate: competitive vs. cooperative) between-subjects ANOVA revealed that participants with unstable power perceived their position as more unstable ( $M = 4.77$ ,  $SD = 2.02$ ), than participants with stable position ( $M = 2.41$ ,  $SD = 1.49$ ); ( $F(1, 210) = 93.641$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\eta_p^2 = .31$ ). These results indicate that our manipulation of power instability functioned as intended. No other effects were significant.

### *Manipulation checks: Climate*

In order to test for the effect of the climate manipulation, we assessed climate on a 7-point scale, ranging from (1 = Not true, 7 = True), with the following two items: (1) The working environment was competitive and (2) The working environment was cooperative. Results of a 2 (Power: unstable vs. stable; between-subjects) x 2 (Climate: competitive vs. cooperative; between subjects) x 2 (Perceived climate: competitive vs. cooperative) mixed-design ANOVA revealed as expected a significant interaction effect of between climate and perceived climate ( $F(1, 210) = 57.97$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\eta_p^2 = .22$ ). Participants in the competitive climate condition

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<sup>1</sup> In Experiment 1, no participants guessed the same stock price as the advice. After excluding extreme values (identified using a step of 1.5xIQR (Interquartile range)), there were 13 participants with  $WOA > 1$  or  $< -1$  for task A, 5 for task B, 5 for task C and 8 for task D. These were treated as  $WOA = 1$  (or  $-1$  for negative values) in computing the average WOA as previous research (e.g. Tost et al. (2012) and Bonaccio and Dalal (2006)). Analyses have been conducted both with and without extreme values, in order to determine whether the conclusion made are identical in both cases.

<sup>2</sup> The significance levels with the absolute value approach are footnoted in the result section.

perceived the climate to be more competitive ( $M = 5.63$ ,  $SD = 1.37$ ) than participants in the cooperative climate ( $M = 4.24$ ,  $SD = 1.6$ ; ( $F(1, 210) = 46.78$ ,  $p < .001$ , 95% CI<sub>Mean-Difference</sub> [.99, 1.79],  $\eta^2_p = .18$ ). In the same vein, participants in the cooperative climate condition perceived the climate to be more cooperative ( $M = 4.96$ ,  $SD = 1.39$ ) than participants in the competitive climate condition ( $M = 3.99$ ,  $SD = 1.47$ ; ( $F(1, 210) = 26.20$ ,  $p < .001$ , 95% CI<sub>Mean-Difference</sub> [.6, 1.36],  $\eta^2_p = .11$ ). These results indicate that our climate manipulation worked as intended.

### *Advice taking*

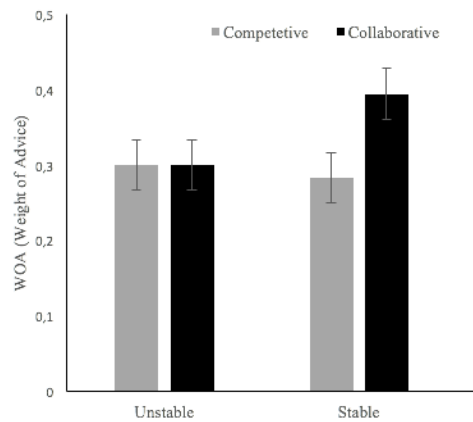
A 2 (Power: unstable vs. stable) x 2 (Climate: competitive vs. cooperative) between-subjects ANOVA revealed that, inconsistent with our reasoning, Power had a non-significant effect<sup>3</sup> ( $F(1,210) = 1.294$ ,  $p = .13$ ). However, Hypothesis 3 was supported as Climate had a significant effect ( $F(1, 210) = 2.742$ ,  $p = .05$ ,  $\eta^2_p = .013$ ), tested with a one-tailed test due to our directional hypothesis. Participants in a competitive climate followed advice to a lesser extent ( $M = .29$ ,  $SD = .24$ ), then participants in a cooperative climate ( $M = .35$ ,  $SD = .26$ ).

Further, our proposed interaction effect of climate on the effect of power on advice taking was also significant ( $F(1, 210) = 2.779$ ,  $p = .049$ ,  $\eta^2_p = .013$ ) with a one-tailed test. Planned contrast analysis revealed that participants with unstable power did not differ in their advice taking dependent on the climate ( $F < 1$ ,  $p = .99$ ). However people with stable power increased their advice taking in a cooperative climate ( $M = .39$ ,  $SD = .29$ ) compared to a competitive climate ( $M = .28$ ,  $SD = .23$ ); ( $F(1, 210) = 5.466$ ,  $p = .02$ , 95% CI<sub>Mean Difference</sub> [.018, .206]). As depicted in Figure 2, individuals with unstable power decrease weighting of advice such that the advice originating in a competitive and cooperative climate receive equal weight, while individuals with stable power differentiate by increasing the weight of advice when the advice originates in a cooperative climate and decreasing the weight of advice originating in a competitive climate. Thus, these results support Hypothesis 3 and 4, but not Hypothesis 1 regarding Power. However, the significant interaction effect (Hypothesis 4) indicates that

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<sup>3</sup> A one-tailed test, due to our directional hypothesis, revealed the following effects with absolute WOA values: Power ( $p = .09$ ), Climate ( $p = .07$ ), Power\*Climate ( $p = .06$ ).

the effect of climate is dependent of power stability. We therefore need to be careful when interpret the main effect of climate.



**Figure 3.**

Mean WOA values by condition. Error bars represent standard errors.

### ***Discussion***

These findings support our prediction that the degree of advice taking is affected by the characteristics of climate, more specifically; advice taking is reduced in a competitive climate. Further, our analysis demonstrated that there was a significant difference between the characteristics of climate, when being in a stable power state. Those with power instability however, do not differ between competitive and cooperative climate when taking advice. This implies that those in an unstable power position places more emphasis on their threatened power position than their working climate, whereas those in a stable power position is more affected by the climate. These findings are consistent with our argumentation that characteristics of climate moderate the relationship between power instability and advice taking. The prediction that power instability reduces advice taking was not supported by this experiment, as the degree of advice taking did not differ significantly between the two power states.

In our second experiment, we sought to replicate the findings from Experiment 1, in addition to search for a main effect of Power. Furthermore, we explore the role of a known subordinate by using real relationships.

## **Experiment 2: Power, climate and advice taking (w/ initials)**

In Experiment 2, we asked a new set of people to engage in our study, estimated to take approximately 10 minutes. Experiment 2 followed the exact same set-up as Experiment 1 with one exception. Following Menon et al. (2006), the participants were initially asked to think of and write the initials of a person whom they know and perceive to be ambitious and competent. Later, we asked the participants to imagine that this person functioned as the advice-giving subordinate in the scenario. The purpose of this was to increase the experimental realism of the manipulations and increase the feeling of threat from the subordinate, by using real relationships. We tested the same hypothesis as in Experiment 1 (Hypothesis 1, 3 and 4).

### ***Method***

#### *Participants*

This experiment was distributed as a link through our social network; Facebook and LinkedIn, as well as via email to our colleagues at our workplaces. The introductory text was identical, to make sure the participants had the same information. 239 people participated in the study. 51,9% of the participants were female, 62,8% under the age of 29 year, 57,3% students and 23,4% with less than one year of leadership experience. The participants were randomly assigned to one of the four experimental groups (see Appendix 2). Participation was unpaid and voluntary. Confidentiality was assured and participation was anonymous, as no traceable or identifying data was stored.

#### *Experimental Design*

All the material presented to the participants was in English. Initially, before the vignette and the first task, participants were asked to think of and write the initials (e.g. "XX") of a person who possess some (or all) the characteristics: ambitious, highly competent, goal oriented. Thereafter, the vignette and first estimation task followed, just as in Experiment 1. After the first round of estimation, the participants were randomly assigned to one of the four experimental conditions. The material for the experimental conditions are provided (see Appendix 2). In the final estimation round, the participants are informed that they recently have hired "XX" as a senior analyst and that this person have provided excellent results since joining the team and clearly have a talent for the business. The participants were

provided with their initial estimates, as well as the estimates of their subordinate “XX”. After seeing the previous estimate as well as those of the advisor’s (“XX”), the participant could revise the estimate and make a new estimate, which then registered as the final estimate.

### *Measure*

This experiment use the same dependent variable as Experiment 1; WOA As Experiment 1, we follow Bonaccio and Dalal (2006) and adjust the values<sup>4</sup>. To investigate if the different calculations of WOA (absolute scores or not absolute scores) affected the nature and significance of the results we conducted the analyses using the absolute value approach as well. The nature and significance did change when using absolute values<sup>5</sup>.

### *Results*

#### *Manipulation checks: Power instability*

Similar to Experiment 1, we assessed power instability on a 7-point scale (1 = Not true, 7 = True) with the following three items: (1) My boss is currently considering if I should be replaced as Manager and (2) My boss has expressed mistrust in me as a Manager. The estimated reliability was  $\alpha = .87$ . A 2 (Power: unstable vs. stable) x 2 (Climate: competitive vs. cooperative) between-subjects ANOVA revealed that participants with unstable power perceived their position as more unstable ( $M = 4.53$ ,  $SD = 1.91$ ), than participants with stable position ( $M = 2.53$ ,  $SD = 1.35$ ); ( $F(1, 235) = 86.91$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\eta_p^2 = .27$ ). These results indicate that our manipulation of power instability functioned as intended. No other effects were significant.

#### *Manipulation checks: Climate*

Identically to Experiment 1, we assessed climate on a 7-point scale, ranging from (1 = Not true, 7 = True), with the following two items: (1) The working environment was competitive and (2) The working environment was cooperative.

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<sup>4</sup> In Experiment 2, one participant guessed the same stock price as the advice (task A). After excluding extreme values (identified using a step of 1.5xIQR (Interquartile range)), there were 17 participants with WOA >1 or < -1 for task A, 8 for task B, 10 for task C and 14 for task D. These were treated as WOA = 1 (or -1 for negative values) in computing the average WOA as previous research (e.g. Tost et al. (2012) and Bonaccio and Dalal (2006)). Analyses have been conducted both with and without extreme values, in order to determine whether the conclusion made are identical in both cases.

<sup>5</sup> The significance levels with the absolute value approach are footnoted in the result section.

Results of a 2 (Power: unstable vs. stable; between-subjects) x 2 (Climate: competitive vs. cooperative; between subjects) x 2 (Perceived climate: competitive vs. cooperative) mixed-design ANOVA revealed as expected a significant interaction effect of between climate and perceived climate ( $F(1, 235) = 40.97, p < .001, \eta^2_p = .15$ ). Participants in the competitive climate condition perceived the climate to be more competitive ( $M = 5.37, SD = 1.68$ ) than participants in the cooperative climate ( $M = 4.35, SD = 1.76; (F(1, 235) = 20.98, p < .001, 95\% CI_{\text{Mean-Difference}} [.59, 1.47], \eta^2_p = .08$ ). In the same vein, participants in the cooperative climate condition perceived the climate to be more cooperative ( $M = 4.79, SD = 1.5$ ) than participants in the competitive climate condition ( $M = 3.55, SD = 1.77; (F(1, 235) = 33.68, p < .001, 95\% CI_{\text{Mean-Difference}} [.81, 1.65], \eta^2_p = .13$ ). These results indicate that our climate manipulation worked as intended.

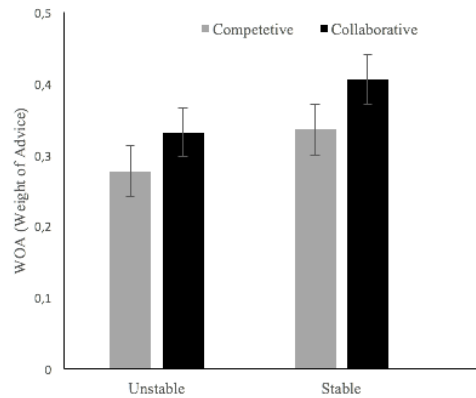
### *Advice taking*

A 2 (Power: unstable vs. stable) x 2 (Climate: competitive vs. cooperative) between-subject ANOVA revealed that our Hypothesis 1 and 3 was supported as both Power ( $F(1,235) = 3.624, p = .03, \eta^2_p = .015$ ) and Climate ( $F(1, 235) = 3.229, p = .04, \eta^2_p = .014$ ) had a significant effect<sup>6</sup>, tested with a one-tailed test due to our directional hypothesis. Participants with an unstable power position followed advice to a lesser extent ( $M = .30, SD = .28$ ), then participants with a stable power position ( $M = .37, SD = .27$ ). This is in line with Hypothesis 1. Further, our third hypothesis is supported as participants in a competitive climate followed advice to a lesser extent ( $M = .31, SD = .27$ ), then participants in a cooperative climate ( $M = .37, SD = .27$ ).

Hypothesis 4 regarding the interaction effect was not supported as there were no significant effect of climate on the effect of power on advice taking ( $F(1, 235) = .063, p = .8$ ). As illustrated in Figure 3, the climate (competitive or cooperative) did not moderate the effect of power on the degree of advice taking.

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<sup>6</sup> A one-tailed test, due to our directional hypothesis, revealed the following effects with absolute WOA values: Power ( $p = .2$ ), Climate ( $p = .17$ ), Power\*Climate ( $p = .1$ ).



**Figure 4.**

Mean WOA values by condition. Error bars represent standard errors.

### *Discussion*

These findings are partially consistent with the results of Experiment 1 and indicate that a competitive climate reduces advice taking. Further, in support of Hypothesis 1, the findings show that power instability reduces advice taking. More specific, the degree of advice taking differ significantly between the two power states, where individuals with an unstable power position followed advice to a lesser extent than those in a stable power position. However, our argumentation that characteristics of climate moderate the relationship between power instability and advice taking was not supported by the findings in this experiment. By contrast from Experiment 1, both of the power states are affected by the climate in the organisation, where individuals in an unstable power position emphasis the characteristics of climate, similarly as those in a stable power position.

Further, being given an unsolicited advice is often considered to be intrusive, a form for criticism (Goldsmith & Fitch, 1997) and inappropriate (Deelstra et al., 2003) By contrast solicited advice is often perceived as cooperative and helpful. Individuals who solicit advice are more likely to follow recommendations than individuals who receive advice without requesting it (Gibbons, 2003 cited in Bonaccio & Dalal, 2006). We therefore propose that soliciting advice differs from receiving unsolicited advice (as in Experiment 1 and 2), but that power instability will affect the same way. Experiment 3 therefore replaces advice taking with soliciting advice, and we examine to what extent power instability affects soliciting advice.

### **Experiment 3: Power and advice seeking**

In Experiment 3, we asked people to engage in our study, estimated to last approximately 5 minutes. In contrast to the other two experiments, this experiment address advice *seeking* instead of advice *taking*. Following Menon et al. (2006) as in Experience 2, the participants were initially asked to think of and write the initials (e.g. “XX”) of a person whom they know and perceive to be ambitious and competent. We then manipulated whether the participants experienced unstable or stable power. After the manipulation, participants were engaged in a real estate investment task, where they were asked to decide which one of three real estate objects to invest in. At the end of the task, the participants were asked if they would like to ask “XX” for advice. We expected to find a negative relationship between power instability and advice seeking, such that individuals with unstable power seek advice to a lesser extent than individuals with stable power (Hypothesis 2).

#### ***Method***

##### *Participants*

This experiment was distributed through an event at BI Norwegian Business School. We bought 150 cinnamon buns and offered the passing students a bun if they responded to the survey in return. 122 people participated in the study. 62.3% of the participants were female, 94.3% under the age of 29 year, 93.4% students and 33.6% with less than one year of leadership experience. Participation was voluntary and paid in terms of a cinnamon bun. Confidentiality was assured and participation was anonymous, as no traceable or identifying data was stored.

##### *Experimental Design*

All the material presented to the participants was in English, except when talking Norwegian to the Norwegian students at the event. Initially, before the vignette and the task, participants were asked to think of and write the initials (e.g. “XX”) of a person who possess some (or all) the characteristics: ambitious, highly competent, goal oriented. Thereafter, the participants were presented with a vignette where they were given information about their leadership position in a real estate company, together with their tasks and responsibilities. Further, participants were randomly assigned to one of two experimental conditions stable



power versus unstable power. The material for the experimental conditions are provided (see Appendix 3). After the manipulation, the real estate investment task was presented. Participants were provided with three real estate objects with the task to decide which one to invest in. Before deciding which apartment to invest in, the participants were informed that they recently had hired “XX” in their team and that this person had provided excellent investment results, and clearly possess a talent for the business. The participants were given the possibility to seek advice from “XX”. After answering whether they wanted to seek advice or not, the task ended.

### *Measures*

The dependent measure in this experiment is advice seeking, more specific whether the participants wanted to ask the familiar subordinate for advice; 1 = Yes, 2 = No.

### **Results**

#### *Manipulation checks: Power instability*

To test for the effect of the power manipulation, we assessed power instability on a 7-point scale (1 = Not true, 7 = True) with the following three items: (1) My boss is currently considering if I should be replaced as Manager and (2) My boss has expressed mistrust in me as a Manager. The estimated reliability was  $\alpha = .83$ . Results of an independent t-test reveal that the participants in a unstable power position responded that they agreed to a greater extent ( $M = 4.32$ ,  $SD = 1.92$ ;  $t(120) = 6.45$ ,  $p < .001$ , 95% CI = Mean Difference [1.37, 2.59]), than participants with a stable power position ( $M = 2.34$ ,  $SD = 1.44$ ). These results indicate that our manipulation of power instability functioned as intended.

#### *Advice seeking*

To test our 4<sup>th</sup> Hypothesis, a Fisher exact test was conducted. Inconsistent with our reasoning, the results did not support our hypothesis, as Power had a non-significant effect ( $p = .53$ ) when testing with a one-tailed test due to our directional hypothesis. The proportion of individuals with an unstable power position who seek advice (90% sought advice) was not significantly different from the proportion of individuals with a stable power position (88.7% sought advice).

In total did 89.3% of the participants sought advice. Controlling for participant's real estate experience did not alter the conclusion.

### ***Discussion***

The findings of our third experiment did not support our prediction that power instability reduces the willingness to solicit advice. More specific, there was not a significant difference between soliciting advice within the two power positions. Individuals in both power positions sought advice to a great extent, where individuals with an unstable power position sought advice more than those with a stable power position. This is contradictory to our hypothesis.

## **General Discussion**

We conducted two experiments to investigate the extent to which power instability, as well as climate, would influence leaders' degree of advice taking, and if the relationship between power instability and advice taking was moderated by the climate (cooperativeness versus competitiveness). Our third experiment investigated to what extent power instability influenced leaders' advice seeking. Overall, some of the findings was consistent across experiments, whereas some findings were inconsistent (see Table 1). First, whereas experiment two suggested that power instability decreased leaders' degree of advice taking, experiment one did not support this notion. Second, across experiment one and two, climate influence degree of advice taking. More specifically, leaders in a competitive climate decreased advice-taking. Third, the support for a moderation effect of climate on the relationship between power instability and advice taking was mixed. The result of experiment one suggested that whereas leaders with unstable power was not influence by type of climate in degree of advice taking, leaders with stable power listen more to advice in a cooperative climate compared to a competitive climate. Last, power instability was not related to advice seeking.

**Table 1***Summary of Support of Hypothesized Relationships Across All Experiments*

#	Hypothesis	E1	E2	E3
1	Power instability reduces weight of advice (advice taking); such that advice is weighted less heavily by individuals with unstable power than by individuals with stable power.	N	Y	–
2	Power instability reduces willingness to solicit advice; such that individuals with unstable power solicit advice less than individuals with stable power.	–	–	N
3	Competitive climate reduces weight of advice (advice taking); such that advice is weighted less heavily by individuals in a competitive climate than by individuals in a cooperative climate.	Y	Y	–
4	There is an interaction effect of power instability and characteristics of the climate. More specifically, individuals with unstable power decrease weighting of advice such that the advice originating in a competitive and cooperative climate will receive equal weight, while individuals with stable power differentiate by increasing the weight of advice when the advice originates in a cooperative climate, while decreasing the weight of advice originating in a competitive climate.	Y	N	–

*Note.* Y = hypothesis was supported; N = hypothesis was not supported; the dash indicates that the hypothesis was not tested

The findings, when testing our proposition that power instability decreased leaders' degree of advice taking, were inconsistent across experiments. The first experiment provided insufficient evidence, while the second experiment provided moderate support to the hypothesis. Advice was discounted by individuals holding an unstable power position. More specific, the degree of advice taking differed significantly between the two power states, where individuals with an unstable power position followed advice to a lesser extent than those in a stable power position. This is in line with the findings of Tost et al. (2012) who found the powerful to take less advice than those in a neutral or low power state, indicating that stable power is more related to low power than high power, even though they are given the same amount of legitimate power. The proposition that unstable power enhances the egocentric advice discounting, resulting in lower receptiveness to the provided advice, is moderately supported when the judge has a relation to the advisor.

The suggestion that the context of cooperative and competitive climate affects how individuals respond to advice was moderately supported in both experiment one and two. More specifically; advice taking was reduced by individuals in a competitive climate. This is in line with Li et al. (2016) who proposed that in a cooperative climate, leaders may use their power to benefit the collective goals, and therefore potentially be more receptive to advice. The degree of advice taking in both climate conditions were higher when having a personal relationship to the subordinate, interestingly also in the competitive climate. However, advice was still discounted by individuals in a competitive climate. Our research indicate that the personal relationship reduces the sense of threat from the subordinate, resulting in overall higher advice taking compared to when the subordinate was unknown. This will be further discussed.

The results regarding the interaction effect of power instability and characteristics of climate was inconsistent across the two first experiments, with moderate support in the first. Experiment 1 revealed that those with power stability increase the advice taking in cooperative climate, but decrease in a competitive climate. Those with power instability however, do not differ between competitive and cooperative climate when taking advice. Pitesa and Thau (2013) argue that when a decision maker experience power, the heightened private self-focus related to power causes them to act consistently with their preferences, even at the cost of their social context. This implies that those in an unstable power position places more emphasis on their threatened power position than their working climate. Perceived threat by a competent follower might lead the powerful to protect their position in the organisation, even at the cost of others (Georgesén & Harris, 2006; Maner & Case, 2016; Williams, 2014). It appears as the protection of their power is more important even if the climate is described as cooperative. Whereas those in a stable power position is more affected by their working climate, as they are not at risk of losing their position. However, the effect of climate is dependent of the power state, meaning that the respondents are not solely affected by the power and climate manipulation on its own. This affects the interpretation of the main effect of climate alone, as it is the power state that determines the effect of climate.

We used slightly different experimental design to test the identical hypothesis in experiment one and two. The effects of changing the experimental design is possibly the main cause for the inconsistent findings. More specific; (1) The removal of the financial performance perspective, and (2) The change in the description of the subordinate. The manipulation in experiment one included organisational performance related to revenue growth or decline (see Appendix 1), where the unstable power position was presented with information regarding a period of decline, and the stable power position with a period of growth. Barberis, Huang, and Santos (2001) found that prior capital advances increased investors' optimism and risk-taking in the stock market, whereas former losses increased risk aversion due to fear of experiencing further losses. The threatened power position could have contributed to risk aversion due to the financial situation, resulting in less discounting of advice by individuals with power instability. The financial performance indication was removed and replaced with information regarding the customers in the second experiment (see Appendix 2). This information could be perceived as milder, causing increased attention to the power position description; trust versus mistrust, a safe position versus the fear of being replaced, etc. This could lead to lower risk aversion and trigger the protection of their position, even at the cost of others. Therefore, the individuals with unstable power discount the advice to a higher degree, and the proposition that power instability decreased leaders' degree of advice taking is moderately supported in the second experiment.

Secondly, the information regarding the subordinate was different across the two experiments. In the first experiment, the subordinate was presented as an unknown person, whereas in experiment two the subordinate was a person who the participant had a relationship with. The findings of the second experiment imply that the personal relationship with the competent subordinate reduced the sense of competition and instability, and that individuals incorporated advice to a greater extent compared to when the subordinate was unknown. Judges have been found to give value to the advice if the receiver has relational closeness to the provider (Goldsmith & Fitch, 1997), and loyal subordinates are less likely to be viewed as a threat to the leader due to lower inclination to use their power against the leader (Leheta et al., 2017). Through introducing a familiar and known subordinate, the perception of threat was possibly reduced and the power instability given less

attention in the second experiment. A possible reason for the insufficient evidence of the interaction hypothesis could be that the protection of the power was less dominating when having a personal relationship with the subordinate, hence the climate had more to say. This resulted in increased listening in the stable power position, but remained unchanged in the unstable position. The power state did not influence the characteristics of climate to the same extent as when the subordinate was unknown. This implies that climate is no longer dependent of the power state, and we can safely interpret the main effect of climate.

The third experiment provides insufficient evidence to the suggestion that power instability reduces willingness to solicit advice. The individuals sought advice disregarding of the power position. Thus, the statement that individuals tend to not seek help, even if they need it (Ackerman & Kenrick, 2008), due to fear of reduced status by appearing incompetent (F. Lee, 1997) did not hold for this experiment. However, the intentions of the judge are not necessarily clear and intent to incorporate the advice in this experiment is not known. De Wit, Scheepers, Ellemers, Sassenberg, and Scholl (2017) argue that power holders often are quite eager to solicit advice from others, even if the purpose essentially is political. In this experiment both unstable and stable powerholders were interested in seeking advice from a competent, known subordinate.

### ***Theoretical contributions***

We argue there to be several contributions of our study on power and advice. The findings from the experiments contribute to the recent research by Tost et al. (2012) who found that advice discounting occurs in high power individuals due to felt competition towards the advice giver. Secondly, previous research has focused on high versus low power, we extend the research by introducing the high-power state as either stable or unstable which it gives a more accurate image of organisational life. Additionally, Tost et al. (2012) used a mundane context, estimation of bodyweight and coins in a jar, while our study illustrates an organisational context by estimating stock prices and real estate investment, together with an ascription of a managerial role. Our work extends the line of research on advice by including the option to solicit advice in a stable or unstable power position.

Our research contribute to the power literature by answering the call of scholars to address how the effect of climate (Li et al., 2016) may influence powerholders. Previous research on advice taking have mainly focused on factors regarding the person, task or advisor. Our studies include context, and revealed that this is an important factor to understand leaders' willingness to take advice. The context of cooperative and competitive climate, as suggested by Li et al. (2016), did partially function as a moderator for the incorporation of advice. However, as the change in the experimental design had such a powerful effect on the results, it poses questions about the robustness of the findings in the studies where the results were inconsistent. Nevertheless, a certainty is that climate is important to understand the degree of advice taking, and that context should not be overlooked in organisational research.

Several of the findings in our research did not support our propositions, or provided inconsistent results. As mentioned, the robustness of the latter findings is questioned. Parts of our research found that power instability did neither reduce advice taking nor the willingness to solicit advice. The moderation effect of climate neither was supported, as both power states were affected by the climate in the organisation. Even though there are non-significant findings, they still have implications for the area of research. These findings contrast with existing theories and previous research. According to Aberson (2002) can one practically, but not technically, accept the null hypothesis. Therefore we cannot draw conclusion supporting the null without information such as confidence intervals around parameters and effect sizes (Aberson, 2002). Hence, generalisation of the null findings cannot be done before further significance testing have been performed (Kluger & Tikochinsky, 2001). These findings emphasize that more research is needed to reconcile these differences.

***Methodological contribution: Absolute values versus real numbers***

Advice is a conceptual variable. In order to make this variable measurable, both empirically and quantitative, one needs to operationalize it. Operationalization is problematic because it depends upon the definition of the individual (Shuttleworth, 2008), and can therefore vary widely. Advice in our studies is calculated into WOA (Weight of Advice), following previous literature such as Tost et al. (2012) and Bonaccio and Dalal (2006). As Harvey and Fischer (1997) noted, the majority of the responses did fall between 0.00 (*advice has no influence*) and 1.00 (*advice is followed fully*) in our study. In the first experiment, 4 responses exceeded -1 and 18 responses had negative values. In the second experiment, 11 responses exceeded -1 and 26 responses had negative values. All of them generally spread out between 0 and -1.

A variable always has more than one possible operationalization. For example, other research such as Yaniv (2004) use absolute values when measuring advice weighting. Depending on how terms are operationalized, the results of a study can vary widely (Shuttleworth, 2008). When converting all our negative values into absolute values, they are converted from moving away from the provided advice, to following the advice. In the case of the values exceeding -1, they are converted from fully moving away, to fully following the advice. We propose that this provides an unrealistic view of the advice taking. The conversion resulted in insignificant results, hence no support of any of the hypotheses. The significance levels of both Hypothesis 3 and 4 are poorer, while the significance level regarding Hypothesis 1 is slightly better, but still non-significant. Significance levels when using absolute values in Experiment 2, is poorer regarding all hypotheses. The operationalization of advice largely impacts the results in our studies. This has consequences in terms of comparability to other research in the area, and makes us question to what degree our research can be compared to the existing literature. Therefore, it is important to be careful when interpreting other research, as the variables could be operationalized differently.



### *Implications for practise*

Our research indicates that leaders in a competitive climate take advice to a much lesser extent than those in a cooperative climate. In a cooperative climate leaders may use their power to benefit the collective goals, and therefore potentially be more receptive to advice. Additionally, parts of our research revealed that leaders with unstable power positions discount advice from subordinates to a high extent compared to leaders with stable power. Individuals who perceive threats and instability, strive to protect their position at all cost (Williams, 2014). The negative effect of power might lead the powerful to harm others in form of defensive denigration (Cho & Fast, 2012) and focus on protecting their position, rather than supporting and developing those around them (Georgesesen & Harris, 2006; Maner & Case, 2016). Even though this could promote individual growth, such behaviour is potentially destructive and a hinder for the organisational development. Leaders should therefore take steps to mitigate these negative effects of power through equalizing the power relations within the organisation and promote non-hierarchical cultures (Tost et al., 2012). Moreover, subordinates who aim for their advice to be adopted should try and make the leader feel like they are cooperative instead of competitive.

An important step toward a non-hierarchical culture could be the promotion of a cooperative culture. In order to improve overall motivation and goal achievement, leaders should reduce the likelihood of feeling competitive towards their advisors. Even though a competitive culture can push individuals to compete and perform better individually, we propose a cooperative climate to be a more sustainable long-term strategy. A confirmation of this is the fact that organisations are becoming more team-based over individual based (Allred et al., 1996). The landscape in the organisations have moved away from closed offices, toward open landscape - even with unassigned and rotating offices. However, a mix between competition and cooperation stimulate new ideas and opportunities (Zhao, Renard, Elmoukhli, & Balague, 2017) and organisations must try to find a balance that stimulates the best of both worlds.

Further, our society is becoming increasingly more knowledge-based (Wiklund & Shepherd, 2003), and since large portions of the knowledge is tacit, it is salient to

liberate this knowledge through sharing and integration. Advice seeking and advice taking can be essential ways to acquire knowledge and ensure sharing of expertise. However, research has shown that people often misunderstand the benefits of combining the estimates of two people and when revising their own judgments, often ignoring the advice from others, making their final estimate less accurate (Larrick & Soll, 2006). Others point of view and collective thinking, can be extremely valuable to the company, and in some cases essential for organisational success. Although listening to advice is an effective way to form more accurate judgements, there is a potential social cost where relying on others can be perceived as a sign of incompetence or uncertainty (F. Lee, 1997; Westphal, 1999). To fight this social cost, organisations need to create cultures and incentives in which organisational members are encouraged to share information and leaders are rewarded for seeking and integrating the perspectives of others (Tost et al., 2012).

### ***Limitations and future directions***

There are multiple avenues of future research that could explore the limitations and boundary conditions of our research and findings. An important boundary condition relevant for three studies, is the low external validity due to our sample. Our findings have high internal validity, but might poorly reflect real leaders. It therefore exists an uncertainty whether the conclusion can be generalised to the real world or not. Further, a limitation in our study regards the high non-response bias. Overall the two first studies had 1,013 respondents, but only 453 completed the experiment, which equal a non-response bias of over 50%. We propose that the high non-response bias might be due to two main limitations (1) The length and complexity of the study, and (2) The use of stock-price development as the estimation task.

Firstly, the surveys of the two first experiments were estimated to take 10-15 minutes, which is considered a long time, due to the amount of information provided and the complexity of the estimation tasks. We did not possess any control over the participants as the studies was distributed online and could therefore not influence participants to complete the studies. If the studies were done in a controlled laboratory environment it might have decreased the non-

response bias. However, we propose that online distribution of the experiments contributed to lower levels of feeling measured among the participants, as well as reducing the opportunity to reveal the aim of the studies.

Secondly, the use of stock–prices as a prediction task might have frightened many participants. We received feedback that individuals had not completed the survey because they felt a lack of information and knowledge in order to contribute to the estimation task. As student at BI Norwegian Business School, reading and understanding graphs, as well as the function of the stock market, is familiar to us and was therefore a competency taken for granted. However, most in our network do not possess the same competence. Fast et al. (2012 Experiment 2) gave their participants information about goals scored and assisted by a selection of Hockey players in the National Hockey League (NHL), before the participants estimated the coming seasons performances. An estimation task such as this, could have addressed the challenge of limited information and be more identifiable for the population. Therefore, the estimation task of our third study addressed a topic one would assume the average population could identify with; real estate.

We expected students at BI to easily identify with real estate, as (1) Many students study to be Real Estate Agents, and (2) Numerous students have bought, or are thinking of buying, their first apartment. Despite the change in estimation task in Experiment 3, there was no significant effect of power instability on advice seeking. We propose that this is due to two main limitations (1) Most respondents being students and (2) The financial incentive. Firstly, the collection of data for our last study took place at BI Norwegian Business School. This resulted in 93.4% of the respondents being students and 94.3% under the age of 29 year. Individuals discount advice less when the tasks are complex (Schrah et al., 2006), and judges ascribe value to the advice when the task is challenging (Gino & Moore, 2007; Gino et al., 2009; Schrah et al., 2006). There exists a possibility that the estimation task was perceived as more difficult and complex by the students, leading them to listen to the advisor to a greater extent. Additionally, it might have been more difficult for students to adapt to the manipulation as they may not be familiar with such work environments nor the high pressure of being a department manager.

Secondly, with great interest and enthusiasm among the students, a cinnamon bun was offered in return for answering the study. Financial incentives have been found to reduce advice discounting (Sniezek, Schrah, & Dalal, 2004; Sniezek & Van Swol, 2001). This is consistent with Camerer and Hogarth (1999) conclusion that incentives increase effort (though not necessarily accuracy). We therefore propose that the incentive could be an important contributor to the fact that such a large proportion of respondents sought advice regardless of their power position. The urge to receive the incentive, as well as the time-limitation for students (break between classes etc.), perhaps resulted in poor focus and accuracy when conducting the study.

Further, our research give possibilities of future investigation of some important aspects. As previously mentioned, Experiment 2 made the participants include initials of a competent person they knew. We originally thought this to increase the feeling of competition between the subordinate, but it had the opposite effect. In an organisational setting a leader will know their subordinates, but it is natural to think that they might categorize them as either friend or foe. In our first experiment, we had a control question regarding the impression of the subordinate; “My subordinate would not willingly do anything to harm me”. This question was excluded from the second study, in our attempt to shorten the survey time to acquire more participants. It would have been interesting to compare the differences and to see how many had chosen familiar person who they deemed unharmed.

Furthermore, the advisor described in Experiment 1 and 2 did not justify why they provided the advice, which does not reflect an real organisational setting where the advice giver often use persuasion tactics. Tormala and Petty (2002) found that participants opposed persuasion when the confrontation was perceived to be strong and when it came from a source with high expertise, whereas weak confrontation did not alter the opinions (Tormala & Petty, 2004). Hence, future research could benefit from including a message from the advisor with some form of persuasive message, for example rational persuasion (S. Lee, Han, Cheong, Kim, & Yun, 2017), which have been found most effective in terms of persuasion, in order to simulate a more realistic setting. The discounting of advice is likely to arise when judges perceive their own estimations to be superior to the estimations

and perspectives of others, and thus experience a higher level of confidence in their individual abilities (Bonaccio & Dalal, 2006; Cialdini, 2005; Krueger, 2003). It would therefore be interesting to investigate whether power stability influence confidence and if the climate can function as a moderator for this.

Lastly, seeking advice could benefit impression management by increasing perceptions of competence from the advisors perspective, especially if the task is difficult (Brooks et al., 2015). For future research, it would therefore be interesting to perform the third experiment in another setting, with a more uniform demographic spread. Additionally, it would be interesting to research the degree of incorporated advice when the advice was sought, as the study revealed that both unstable and stable powerholders are interested in seeking advice. Judges who seek advice have been found more likely to incorporate the recommendation than judges who receive unsolicited advice (Gibbons, 2003 cited in Bonaccio & Dalal, 2006). Would this also be the case for unstable and stable powerholders and would the climate have anything to say for the willingness to seek advice and the incorporation?

## **Conclusion**

Listening to others and gaining a broader perspective is argued to be the easiest way to improve one's decision (Tost et al., 2012). However, there are conditions which make individuals discount advice from others. The findings of this study reveal that power instability and characteristics of climate have a negative effect on advice taking. Further, the individuals, regardless of condition, listen more when there exists a personal relationship between the judge and the advisor. The discoveries have theoretical implications for advice taking research, especially with respect to the research addressing the effect of power and climate. However, one need to be careful when generalising these results due to inconsistent findings and small effect sizes. Additional research is needed.

## Appendix

### *Appendix 1 – The four experimental groups used in Experiment 1*

**Table 2**

*Information provided in the four experimental groups in Experiment 1*

		Power	
		Stable (S)	Unstable (U)
Climate	Collaborative (COL)	<p>The company has in the last period had a steady revenue growth. Further, your boss has expressed <b>trust</b> in you as the department manager. Specifically, your boss has recently indicated that <b>you will keep your position</b> as a manager of the department, making you <b>certain</b> about keeping your managerial position.</p> <p>The work environment in the company put emphasis on group performance, where <b>collective</b> goal achievement is rewarded and praised. The employees <b>support</b> each other and work together to achieve a common purpose, and strive for organizational success.</p>	<p>Your company has in the last period had a substantial decline in the revenue. On top of this your boss has expressed <b>mistrust</b> in you as the department manager. Specifically, your boss is currently considering whether <b>you should be replaced</b> with one of your subordinates as manager, making you <b>uncertain</b> as to whether you will be keeping your position.</p> <p>The work environment in your company put emphasis on group performance, where <b>collective</b> goal achievement is rewarded and praised. The employees <b>support</b> each other and work together to achieve a common purpose, and strive for organizational success</p>
	Competitive (COM)	<p>The company has in the last period had a steady revenue growth. Further, your boss has expressed <b>trust</b> in you as the department manager. Specifically, your boss has recently indicated that <b>you will keep your position</b> as a manager of the department, making you <b>certain</b> about keeping your managerial position.</p> <p>The work environment in the company puts emphasis on <b>individual</b> performances, where personal goal achieved and praised. The employees <b>compete</b> and compare themselves with each other, and strive for personal success.</p>	<p>Your company has in the last period had a substantial decline in the revenue. On top of this your boss has expressed <b>mistrust</b> in you as the department manager. Specifically, your boss is currently considering whether <b>you should be replaced</b> with one of your subordinates as manager, making you <b>uncertain</b> as to whether you will be keeping your position.</p> <p>The work environment in your company puts emphasis on <b>individual</b> performances, where personal goal achievement is rewarded and praised. The employees <b>compete</b> and compare themselves with each other, and strive for personal success.</p>

**Appendix 2 – The four experimental groups used in Experiment 2**

**Table 3**

*Information provided in the four experimental groups in Experiment 2*

		Power	
		Stable (S)	Unstable (U)
Climate	Collaborative (COL)	<p>The company has in the last period delivered precise and good estimations of the stock markets development to the customers. Even though, it is extremely important that the predictions is <b>as accurate as possible</b> to maintain the satisfied customers.</p> <p>As a consequence of the good results, your boss has expressed <b>trust</b> in your competency in stock predictions. Specifically, your boss has recently indicated that <b>you will keep your position</b> as a manager of the department, making you <b>certain</b> about keeping your managerial position. The boss also made it clear that you are responsible for continuing the positive trend.</p> <p>The work environment put emphasis on group performance, where <b>collective</b> goal achievement is rewarded and praised. The employees <b>support</b> each other and work together to achieve a common purpose, and strive for organizational success.</p>	<p>The company has in the last period experienced some difficulties with providing the customers with correct predictions of the stock market's development. Therefore, it extremely important that the predictions is <b>as accurate as possible</b> to prevent losing the unsatisfied customers.</p> <p>As a consequence of the difficulties, your boss has expressed <b>mistrust</b> in your competence in stock predictions. Specifically, your boss is currently considering whether <b>you should be replaced</b> with one of your subordinates as manager, making you <b>uncertain</b> as to whether you will be keeping your position. The boss also made it clear that you will be held responsible if the negative trend continues.</p> <p>The work environment put emphasis on group performance, where <b>collective</b> goal achievement is rewarded and praised. The employees <b>support</b> each other and work together to achieve a common purpose, and strive for organizational success.</p>
	Competitive (COM)	<p>The company has in the last period delivered precise and good estimations of the stock markets development to the customers. Even though, it is extremely important that the predictions is <b>as accurate as possible</b> to maintain the satisfied customers.</p> <p>As a consequence of the good results, your boss has expressed <b>trust</b> in your competency in stock predictions. Specifically, your boss has recently indicated that <b>you will keep your position</b> as a manager of the department, making you <b>certain</b> about keeping your managerial position. The boss also made it clear that you are responsible for continuing the positive trend.</p> <p>The work environment in your company puts emphasis on <b>single</b> performances, where individual goal achievement is rewarded and praised. The employees <b>compete</b> and compare themselves with each other, and strive for personal success.</p>	<p>The company has in the last period experienced some difficulties with providing the customers with correct predictions of the stock market's development. Therefore, it extremely important that the predictions is <b>as accurate as possible</b> to prevent losing the unsatisfied customers.</p> <p>As a consequence of the difficulties, your boss has expressed <b>mistrust</b> in your competency in stock predictions. Specifically, your boss is currently considering whether <b>you should be replaced</b> with one of your subordinates as manager, making you <b>uncertain</b> as to whether you will be keeping your position. The boss also made it clear that you will be held responsible if the negative trend continues.</p> <p>The work environment in your company puts emphasis on <b>single</b> performances, where individual goal achievement is rewarded and praised. The employees <b>compete</b> and compare themselves with each other, and strive for personal success.</p>

*Appendix 3 – The two experimental groups used in Experiment 3*

**Table 4**

*Information provided in the two experimental groups in Experiment 3*

Power	
Stable (S)	Unstable (U)
<p>The company has in the last period experienced beneficial real estate investments, with <b>high quality decisions</b> regarding property investments. Even though, it is extremely important that the new investments is <b>as profitable as possible</b> to maintain the profitability.</p> <p>As a consequence of the good results, your boss has expressed <b>trust</b> in your competency in real estate investments. Specifically, your boss has recently indicated that <b>you will keep your position</b> as a manager of the department, making you <b>certain</b> about keeping your managerial position. The boss also made it clear that you are responsible for continuing the positive trend.</p>	<p>The company has in the last period experienced some difficulties with <b>low quality decisions</b> regarding property investment. Therefore, it extremely important that the new investments is <b>as profitable as possible</b> to prevent major losses.</p> <p>As a consequence of the difficulties, your boss has expressed <b>mistrust</b> in your competency in real estate investment. Specifically, your boss is currently considering whether <b>you should be replaced</b> with one of your subordinates as manager, making you <b>uncertain</b> as to whether you will be keeping your position. The boss also made it clear that you will be held responsible if the negative trend continues.</p>



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